DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 269 723 CS 008 403

AUTHOR Miller, Joan S.
TITLE Story Structure: A Missing Ingredient in Basal Reader Stories?
PUB DATE [86]
NOTE 80p.
PUB TYPE Reports - Research/Technical (143)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC04 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Basal Reading; Inferences; Junior High Schools; *Reading Comprehension; Reading Improvement; *Reading Research; Reading Strategies; Recall (Psychology); *Remedial Reading; *Story Grammar

ABSTRACT

Working on the assumption that story structure contributes to the reading comprehension of students, a study assessed the comprehension and recall of 12 seventh and eighth grade remedial reading students. Subjects read a basal story revised to conform to a familiar story grammar and the original, unrevised, basal story. The two original stories were published by the Houghton Mifflin Company in their 1979 basal reading series. The revised stories conformed to a story grammar that consists of two parts--the setting plus one or two episodes--and three types of intercategory connectives. After reading both stories, students answered five literal and five inferential questions for each story that reconstructed the story according to the categories of the story grammar. Results indicated that students comprehended the revised, well-structured stories better than the original, poorly structured basal stories. Findings were significant for both stories on the literal questions, but were significant for only one story on the inferential questions. (HOD)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

X This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

ED269723

Story Structure: A Missing Ingredient in Basal Reader Stories?

Joan S. Miller

William Paterson College

Department of Education

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Joan S. Miller

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

CS008403

Table of Contents

CHAPTER 1 The Problem..... 3
Purpose of the Study..... 4
Statement of the Problem..... 4
Hypothesis..... 4
Definitions..... 4
Limitations..... 5
Significance of the Study..... 6

CHAPTER 2 Review of the Literature..... 8
Definition of Story Grammar..... 9
Results of Research..... 10
Question Outlines..... 14
Strategies for Development..... 17
Are Basal Readers Adequate?..... 24
Summary..... 28

CHAPTER 3 Methods and Procedures..... 29
Subjects..... 29
Setting..... 29
Sample..... 29
Instruments..... 30
Description..... 30
Validity..... 34
Reliability..... 34
Procedures..... 35
Description..... 35
Collection of Data..... 36
Treatment of Data..... 36
Summary..... 37

CHAPTER 4 Results..... 38
Results from Story 1..... 39
Discussion..... 39
Results from Story 2..... 41
Discussion..... 42
General Observations..... 43

CHAPTER 5 Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations..... 45
Summary..... 45
Conclusions..... 46
Recommendations..... 46
To Teachers..... 46
To Authors..... 47
To Publishers..... 48

REFERENCES..... 50

APPENDIX..... 55

CHAPTER 1

The Problem

The 1981 National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP) report indicates that during the 1970's American education made excellent progress for 9-year-olds; however, American education did not do as well with 13-year-olds or 17-year-olds, particularly on test items requiring inferential and interpretive comprehension. This NAEP report is one of the main reasons comprehension performance is a major concern for researchers and educators today (Pearson, 1985).

Research indicates that one of the ways to improve comprehension of narratives is to teach children to attend to the parts of a well-formed story, using a story grammar approach (Rand, 1984; Spiegel, 1985). These studies reveal that children who have prior knowledge, or schemata, for the structure of stories comprehend and recall stories better than children who do not have the schemata (McNeil, 1984). Recently, research has also shown that the story grammar approach improves the quality and creativity of the stories children write (Spiegel, 1985; Strickland & Feeley, 1985). Since story schema plays such an important role in children's reading and writing, it follows that teachers should develop this "sense of story" in the classroom. To do the job properly, however, teachers need to offer students well-structured stories that adhere to predictable story grammars.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to assess the differences in comprehension performance of seventh and eighth grade remedial reading students after they read a basal story revised to conform to a familiar story grammar and after they read a basal story that does not conform to the organizational rules of a predictable story grammar. Student responses to comprehension questions based on story grammar will reveal the amount of literal and inferential information recalled after reading both types of stories.

Statement of the Problem

The question for this study is: Will junior high school students in a remedial reading program comprehend stories revised to conform to a familiar story grammar better than stories that do not fit into a predictable structure?

Hypothesis

Junior high school students in a remedial reading program will comprehend stories revised to conform to a familiar story grammar better than stories that do not fit into a predictable structure.

Definitions

1. Basal reading program or series - a comprehensive, integrated set of books, workbooks, teacher's manuals, and other materials for developmental reading instruction, chiefly in the elementary and middle school grades.

2. Bottom-up model of reading - the text structure assumes a primary role and prior knowledge is secondary; the reader assumes

a relatively passive role; the reader decodes symbols into sound and then meaning.

3. Controlled vocabulary - the practice of limiting the number of new words introduced in successive pages or lessons in basal reading texts.

4. Interactive model of reading - the reader uses a bottom-up and top-down approach depending upon his hypotheses concerning the text.

5. Readability formula - a technique for determining the difficulty of reading materials, generally taking into account vocabulary and sentence length.

6. Schema - conceptual knowledge about the world that the reader uses when reading or understanding a text; prior knowledge.

7. Story grammar - a structure or pattern by which stories are constructed; a framework.

8. Top-down model of reading - prior knowledge assumes a primary role and text structure is secondary; the reader plays an active role; the reader uses his general knowledge, context of the text, and symbol-sound knowledge to get meaning.

Limitations

The 12 subjects in this study are seventh and eighth grade remedial reading students from a middle class, suburban community.

When conducting the study, possible threats to internal validity were controlled: (a) by administering the study over a short period of time, (b) by using a stratified random sampling

procedure, and (c) by counterbalancing the presentation of stories to the students.

Possible threats to external validity were controlled: (a) by not conducting pretests (b) by not telling students whether they had well-structured or poorly-structured stories, and (c) by generalizing the results of this study only to populations similar to the one described--seventh and eighth grade remedial readers from a middle class, suburban community.

Significance of the Study

According to a 1977 national survey reported by the Educational Products Information Exchange, teachers use commercial materials for 94% of their classroom instruction (Durkin, 1978-79; Shannon, 1982). Shannon also says that most teachers use basal readers and workbooks daily. Since these are the materials teachers are using, it is extremely important that the stories in the basal readers be well-structured and interesting to children.

Remedial reading teachers also use basals when matching students with appropriate texts. The main task for remedial teaching is to arouse and maintain the will to learn (Harris, 1980). This is difficult if materials lack structure and are confusing to children. The interest value of story content is also important for children in remedial programs, because children try hardest on materials they enjoy.

During the past five years basal readers have been criticized, because some of the stories lack structure and "storiness"

features (Bettelheim & Zelan, 1981; Steinberg & Bruce, 1980). However, there has been little systematic evaluation concerning the presence or absence of story structure in basal reader selections (Brennan, Bridge, & Winograd, 1986).

This study will assess the comprehension and recall of seventh and eighth grade remedial reading students after they read a poorly-structured basal story and after they read a revised, well-structured version of a basal story. If structure contributes to the comprehension and recall of the students, the results of this study will add to the general body of literature on the subject, and there will be important implications for teachers, authors, and publishers.

CHAPTER 2

Review of the Literature

In recent years there has been growing support for the interactive model of reading proposed by Rumelhart (1977). This model incorporates both the bottom-up and top-down models of reading and states that readers use their prior knowledge (schemata) as well as the graphic symbols of the text to gain meaning from print (Harris, 1980). This active process of reading stresses the equal importance of schema and text. If what children know affects what they learn (McNeil, 1984, p. 3), there are enormous implications for teachers in comprehension instruction.

Pearson (1985) says, "There can be no doubt that children's reading comprehension performance concerns educators at all levels today" (p. 724). He recommends six changes in the way teachers should be teaching reading comprehension. All of his recommendations are based on the interactive model of reading, which emphasizes the importance of developing children's prior knowledge. One of the changes he recommends concerns story grammar. He states that one of the most meaningful and effective ways teachers can develop schema for narratives is to use story grammar as a framework for understanding and recalling stories.

This chapter will define story grammar, summarize the research, present question outlines based on story grammar, describe other strategies for developing story schema, and discuss

the adequacy of basal stories for the effective teaching of comprehension.

Definition of Story Grammar

The notion that discourse is remembered with the aid of an abstract structural schema was first proposed by Bartlett, who conducted studies in England in 1932 (Thorndyke, 1977). He discovered that people have knowledge about the structure of stories and use this knowledge to comprehend and recall stories. Within the past ten years, others have conducted research based on Bartlett's ideas and have confirmed the importance of story structure, or story grammar, in comprehension and recall.

A story grammar is a set of rules in a hierarchical arrangement, which classifies the components of a story and specifies the relationship among the parts (Dreher & Singer, 1980). According to Whaley (1981), there are currently four major story grammars derived from an oral folktale or fairy tale tradition. These grammars were developed by Mandler and Johnson (1977), Rumelhart (1978), Stein and Glenn (1979), and Thorndyke (1977). Some of the grammars are more complex than others, but all include the following elements that are found in stories from Western cultures:

1. Stories are made of a theme and a plot.
2. The plot is made of an episode or series of episodes.
3. A complete episode contains a setting and a series of events.

4. The setting describes time, place, and the central character.

5. The series of events include:

a. an initiating event that sets a goal or problem.

b. attempts to achieve the goal or solve the problem.

c. goal attainment or resolution of the problem, and

d. reactions of characters to events (Marshall, 1983).

A story grammar represents an average of all possible story structures. Not all categories are present in all stories.

Results of Research

Research concerning story structure has proliferated during the last decade. Applebee (1980) analyzed 360 stories told by two-to five-year-olds and concluded that preschool children have a firmly developed sense of story that influences their reactions to new stories. He feels they understand the conventions of story-telling--the proper syntax, word choice, and text structure, as well as the use of appropriate settings, events, and character types. Stein and Glenn (1979) also found that children as young as five years old are aware of basic story structure and use it to comprehend stories they hear or stories they create themselves.

Whaley (1981) concluded that readers and listeners of any age expect particular story structures and use story schemata when comprehending and recalling stories. She found that knowledge of the structure of stories develops during preschool years and continues to be refined during elementary school and later years.

However, the story schemata of children and adults differ at various points in development (Mandler & Johnson, 1977; McConaughy, 1982; Stein & Glenn, 1979). Children focus on beginnings and endings of stories and the obvious attempts and outcomes in between; adults focus not only on these, but add the motivations of the characters. Also, children tend to make fewer inferences than adults, and those they do make refer to actions rather than internal states of characters.

Research also indicates that the position of an element in the story grammar hierarchy makes a difference in a person's ability to recall that element. Sentences which reveal elements high in the hierarchy, such as setting, theme, plot, and resolution, are more likely to be remembered than those sentences which reveal elements lower in the hierarchy, such as specific attempts, outcomes, and subgoals (Rumelhart, 1978; Thorndyke, 1977).

Other studies were conducted in classrooms to see if students' comprehension and recall of stories improved with direct instruction of story grammar. Dreher and Singer (1980) concluded that learning to identify explicitly the structure of a story did not increase the amount or type of story information that fifth graders recalled. They felt that older children had adequately internalized story structure even though they lacked the labels for the categories or concepts. However, in studies by Dewitz and Tackett (1981) results indicated that teaching story structure improved some children's comprehension, and the instruction may

even be helpful to poor readers.

More recent studies, conducted during the past five years, indicate that knowledge of story grammar is not only important to comprehension and recall, but is worthwhile in other areas of learning as well. Gordon and Braun (1983) developed an eleven stage method which was aimed at transferring knowledge of story schema to new or more difficult tasks, such as reading unfamiliar selections or writing original stories. Olson (1984) developed guidelines for helping grade school children prepare written book reports. The procedures in these two studies will be discussed more fully later in this report.

Gordon (1984) added to the research of Dreher and Singer (1980) and Whaley (1981). She examined samples of story retellings and story writings of first, second, and third grade children and noted the increasing complexity across grade levels. She concluded that as children develop their concept of story, they use more developed plots and settings, more elaboration of details, and more attributes, motivations, and reactions of the characters.

Nolte and Singer (1985) found that teaching fourth and fifth graders to ask themselves questions based on story grammar about key points of a story significantly improved their performance on tests about story content. Nineteen students in a group which received active comprehension training outperformed twenty-one students in a control group on a transfer test of twenty

multiple-choice items. Nolte and Singer concluded that when students are taught a "process" of comprehension, their understanding of stories is improved, and the strategies they learn in the process are transferable to new stories. This process includes teacher modeling of questions at pertinent points in a story and then a phase out of teacher questioning and a phase in of student self-questioning.

Finally, Morrow (1985) conducted three related studies, each using kindergarten children, involving story retelling and comprehension assessment. Her research reveals that retelling, with guided practice, and the use of the Directed Reading Approach (DRA) improves comprehension. The DRA method included discussion and used traditional literal, inferential, and critical comprehension questions as well as questions based on the structural elements of stories. All the children in the experimental treatment groups (in the three studies) achieved higher scores than the children in the control groups. However, low achievers did not show as much improvement as the higher achievers. After children learn to read, Morrow suggests (like Nolte & Singer, 1985) that children take over the framing of their own questions.

Although there is some disagreement concerning the value of direct teaching of story grammar, there appears to be widespread agreement that comprehension questions based on story grammar help students develop a story schema, or set of expectations, about

stories. This predictability aids their comprehension (Sadow, 1982). Also, most agree that a teacher's knowledge of story grammar helps in designing more appropriate comprehension questions and helps in evaluating students' comprehension of stories (Guthrie, 1977; Sebesta, Calder, & Cleland, 1982).

Question Outlines Based on Story Grammar

It is through questioning that teachers teach the comprehension of stories. Sadow (1982) says, "Story grammar offers a means of deriving questions that, taken as a whole, reflect the story as a whole" (p. 62). The questions reflect the basic structure of the story and help children internalize that structure. Questions also develop a set of expectations, or story schema, which serves as a guide in organizing story information. The purpose of asking questions based on story grammar is to foster this development of a story schema (McNeil, 1984; Sadow, 1982). Sadow, McConaughy, and Marshall have developed questions based on story grammar that can be used to assess children's comprehension of stories.

Sadow (1982) bases her questions on Rumelhart's 1975 story grammar which consists of a setting and an episode. The setting includes introduction of main characters and the time and place in which events occur. The episode consists of an initiating event, reaction of the main character to that event, an action on the part of the main character that is motivated by the reaction, and a consequence that is a direct outcome of the action. Sadow's

questions elicit both literal and inferential levels of thought and highlight the information that makes a story coherent to children.

McConaughy (1982) believes that knowledge of story structures and story schemata have their best educational applications when placed within a developmental perspective. Her set of questions also takes into account the structural organization of story text as described in story grammars. She divides comprehension questions into three categories--Causal Inference Schema, Social Inference Schema, and Going Beyond the Story Text. There are specific questions for "what happened" in the story on the causal inference level, "why it happened" on the social inference level, and questions that sample readers' reactions to the story on the beyond-the-text level. She also presents a hierarchical distinction between the most important elements in the structured organization of the story and the supporting details, a refinement of the "main idea" approach.

McConaughy based her ordering of comprehension questions on research which states that children and adults both have a sense of story but emphasize different parts of stories in their summaries. Her research supports the studies of Mandler and Johnson (1977) as well as Stein and Glenn (1979). Children usually emphasize the causal relations in the action sequences of the stories, beginnings and endings and attempts and outcomes in between; adults emphasize these also, but add the major goals and

motivations of the characters and make more inferences than the children. Thus, as we pass from childhood to adulthood, our story schema develops and becomes more complex. McConaughy's framework of questions addresses this issue and is a guide for teachers. For example, she suggests that good readers in the middle grades may be able to focus on the Social Inference level questions after a summary of the Causal Inference level material. Poor readers, however, may have more difficulty at this more complex level and may have to start at the Causal Inference level of questioning.

Marshall (1983) also believes that story grammar makes an excellent basis for evaluating students' comprehension. She uses seven story grammar elements and presents several question frames under each element, so that a teacher can select questions under each element that are most appropriate for a particular story. This outline can be used repeatedly. Literal and inferential questions are asked, and students deal not only with the explicit and implicit information in the story, but the story organization as well. Marshall also uses a checklist with story grammar headings to evaluate students' comprehension when retelling a story. There are boxes for recording student retellings four times during the year. In order to retell a story, a student must organize the information that he or she thinks is important. Then, as the student orally retells the story, the teacher scores the elements of story grammar with a + (mentioned with no prompting), a √ (mentioned after a question or prompt), or a -

(failed to mention after a question or prompt). The marks are underlined if a student has had to infer the answer. The checklist can be used for any grade level and for any length of story. In addition, Marshall feels that the retelling checklist emphasizes comprehension as an integrated process, rather than a collection of isolated skills.

These three comprehension question outlines by Sadow, McConaughy, and Marshall help children achieve their expectations about stories. By questioning children appropriately, teachers help children develop their concept of story structure. John Guthrie (1977) says, "Comprehension of a story is not comprehension of haphazard facts or a main idea, but it is comprehension of the structure.... It is comprehension of the setting, theme, plot and resolution, their components, and their interrelationships" (p. 577).

Strategies for Developing Story Schema

In addition to question outlines which assess comprehension, other instructional strategies have been suggested to develop children's concept of story. Some of these strategies are aimed not only at improving the comprehension and recall of stories but also the writing of stories.

The narrative diagram of Arthur Applebee (1978) is one method that can be used to teach the elements of story grammar. It can be used for short stories and book-length fiction, and is adaptable to all grade levels. The diagram represents main

events, sequence, cause and effect, and their relationship to the theme or focus of a story in a concise and graphic manner (Sebesta et al., 1982). When used as a teaching device, it encourages discussion about the different parts of a story, while still relating these parts to the whole. It can also be used as a follow-up activity after class discussion to assess each student's recall of the story. In order to draw the appropriate lines (events) or arrows (cause and effect), the student must look beyond the explicit facts and details of the story and explore the implicit ideas as well.

Whaley (1981) suggests the following strategies to develop children's concept of story and to increase their knowledge of story elements: (a) Provide children with plenty of opportunities to experience all types of stories; (b) read to them regularly and discuss the story parts and causal relationships with them; (c) increase their predictive abilities by having them finish incomplete stories; (d) delete a whole story category, such as setting or reaction, and have students supply the missing material (a macrocloze activity); (e) use scrambled stories to teach category sequence, with discussions centering on rationales for different orders of categories; and (f) retell stories (teacher or students) that were previously read to heighten the awareness of common story structures. Whaley feels these strategies not only increase children's concept of story but also their comprehension and recall.

Story frames, suggested by Fowler (1982), are instructional strategies that guide children's responses to comprehension questions and help them develop independent comprehension skills. The story frames can be used to teach story grammar elements, each frame guiding the student to places in the story where particular information can be found. When constructing a story frame, the teacher reads a story or passage and identifies the problem on which the child should focus--a story summary, important idea or plot, setting, or character analysis. A paragraph is sketched out and words are deleted, except those necessary to sustain the purpose of the paragraph. The frames can be adapted to children of various reading abilities in the classroom and to any grade level. Eventually, children are able to organize information and develop oral and written responses without having to refer to the story frame model, and they have also learned a strategy that can be used for independent reading.

Gordon and Braun (1983) demonstrated, through a field-tested instructional method, that knowledge of story grammar improves not only reading comprehension but also writing skills. Their technique consists of eleven stages. They begin by using an "ideal" story, one that is well-structured according to story grammar rules, to introduce story grammar terminology. Using a diagram and the appropriate terms, the teacher (with the help of the children) fills in information from the ideal story. Then, the inductive teaching approach is used to deal with the specific

story categories in other well-structured stories. Children first identify the major setting in each of three different stories, then the starting event in each of the three different stories, and so on, before trying to identify all story components in one selection. Thus, the structure element is held constant while the story content is varied. When children can associate story content with specific text structure categories, they then replace teacher-posed prereading questions with their own questions. Knowledge of story grammar serves as a framework for developing these prereading questions. Finally, knowledge of story schema is transferred to writing activities. Group stories are produced with the teacher's guidance, and then stories are produced by the class without teacher guidance. In the last stage of this instructional technique, children apply their knowledge of story structure by writing stories independently. Gordon and Braun's method stresses transferring what is learned to new material and also to writing one's own stories.

Another strategy used for improving writing was demonstrated by Olson (1984). She developed guidelines to help grade school students prepare written book reports. Her guidelines state that teachers must begin by developing the concept that stories have common features--main characters perform in a setting and have goals. Then, teachers should describe story grammar categories as the story plan, or map, that moves the story from one point to another. A story, such as The Three Bears, can be used to

illustrate the terms of story grammar. After using several stories that relate characters and events to specific story grammar categories, the children are then given an explicit format for writing their book reports. The format is modified depending on the grade level of the children. Olson's guidelines were followed by two teachers, one in a second grade classroom and one in a fifth grade classroom. The second grade teacher used an illustrated wall map, which showed a pathway to follow from reading a book to "Book Report Park." A drawing at each stop along the path provided a visual reminder for a particular story grammar category. An illustrated handout of the map was then given to each child in the class. Next to each drawing were lines for the child to write short paragraphs about his particular book. The fifth grade teacher used a story outline based on a story grammar by Stein and Glenn (1977). She used six Roman numerals, each corresponding to a different story grammar category, and leading questions which would keep the children on target. The children were instructed to write one paragraph for each of the six categories when writing their book reports. The guidelines used in both classrooms were successful. Both teachers reported an increase in achievement and a high degree of participation, interest, and motivation.

Stahl-Gemake and Guastello (1984) devised a method which extended the use of story grammar into classrooms of English as a Second Language students. The children were bilingual, bicultural

sixth graders enrolled in an intercity school in Brooklyn, New York. First, they used a simple story grammar and the story, Jack and the Beanstalk, to develop an awareness of the narrative components in fairy tales and folktales. Then, they taught the students to compose original tales by manipulating the story elements. After editing each other's story, with the help of the teachers, each child drew pictures to illustrate his particular story content. Finally, each story was assembled into a picture book to be read to other classmates, younger children, or displayed in the school library. The use of story grammar as a functional outline helped these children sequence their stories and control their ideas.

Recognizing the importance of developing children's concept of story, Strickland and Feeley (1985) have suggested a model for integrating the teaching of story that uses the modalities of reading, listening, speaking (including creative dramatics), and writing. Their model for improving story reading and story writing consists of three steps.

In the first step the students are exposed to a variety of stories within a particular genre. The teacher reads aloud and gives book talks, and the children do independent reading. Group discussion and personal conferences focus on story elements, and questions are framed to encourage students to use their prior knowledge about stories to make predictions about the text.

In the second step children participate in activities which

extend their concept of story. Some suggestions are: (a) discussion using story-based questions that encourage looking back, reflecting, re-creating, and creating alternatives; (b) creative dramatics that include pantomime or role-playing; and (c) oral and written retellings of stories using the story elements as a framework. Those children who have read the same story compare their written work using the story elements as a basis for comparison.

In the third and final step of the model, the children do writing activities that progress from: (a) whole group writing of a favorite story with the teacher as scribe to (b) whole group writing of an original, but similar, story with the teacher as scribe to (c) small groups collaborating on an original story with a student as scribe to (d) individuals writing original stories on their own, which will later be shared with the group.

The three-step model develops concept of story and assists teachers in making the reading-writing connection and in dealing with different ability levels in the classroom. It also allows for teacher and student decision-making throughout the model stages.

All of these strategies, from simple suggestions to fully developed models for instruction, require well-structured stories as a foundation for teaching. Without well-structured stories, teachers can not teach comprehension of narratives effectively.

Are Basal Readers Adequate for the Effective Teaching of Comprehension?

Since teachers use basal readers for 94% of their teaching instruction (Durkin, 1978-79; Shannon, 1982), it is important that stories in the basal series have literary quality, be interesting to children, and have well-structured story lines (Bettelheim & Zelan, 1981). Some authors feel this is not always the case. During the past ten years, publishers of basal reading series have been criticized for not providing these criteria in many of their basal selections.

Publishers have been criticized for putting too much emphasis on making basal selections conform to readability formulas. They have used short, simple sentences, repetition of high-frequency sight words, and words that conform to easily decodable spelling patterns. A more glaring accusation is that readability formulas are being used to write stories (Brennan et al., 1986). Critics also say that publishers and authors are using "safe" topics for stories. In order to sell their product to school districts all over the country, publishers want stories that are free from controversy (Bettelheim & Zelan, 1981). By controlling sentence length and vocabulary and using readability formulas to write stories (that do not risk controversy), authors and publishers "have frequently ignored other crucial characteristics of 'good' stories, including not only story structure but also continuity, coherence, conflict, and surprise" (Bettelheim &

Zelan, 1981, 1982; Brennan et al., 1986; Steinberg & Bruce, 1980).

Research appears to support these criticisms. A study by Pearson (1974-75) using 64 high and average achieving third and fourth graders indicated that grammatical complexity often aids comprehension and recall, rather than hindering it. Pearson reviewed basal reading texts and then wrote simple sentences or groups of sentences on 4" x 6" index cards that were similar to the sentences found in basal readers. The children with the more complex sentences outperformed the children with the simple sentences. Because the shorter sentences required more inferencing on the part of the readers, the study refuted the theory that by reducing sentence length and by eliminating complexity passages will be easier to understand. What happens can be explained as a trade-off relationship betwen explicitness (the complex sentences) on one hand and simplicity (the simple sentences needing inferencing) on the other.

Bettelheim and Zelan (1981, 1982) have recently examined basal reading selections and have found them inferior in several areas. They state that the language in the stories often deviates from ordinary language and usage, especially in the lower levels, and children are often asked to reread the same vocabulary words endlessly. They also feel the basal stories are bland and lack meaningful content. Vocabulary is also less challenging. First-grade primers today contain only one-fourth of the vocabulary presented to first-graders 50 years ago. Like Pearson

(1974-75), Bettelheim and Zelan conclude that texts which consist of words that are chosen because they are easily decodable and sentences which consist of words that no one would ever say are actually harder for children to read.

Other studies have examined storiness features in primary basal readers. Steinberg and Bruce (1980) have done the only known published study that analyzes children's text to determine presence and type of conflict. They found that conflict is frequently missing in many basal stories. Moscow's unpublished study (cited in Brennan et al., 1986), which analyzed 110 first-grade reading selections at two levels of three well-known series, found that many of the basal reading selections, especially in the lower levels, did not meet minimal requirements for storiness. Morrow (1982) examined six basal series and found that three structures were most common--confrontation, episodic, and plotless. Three series which placed greater emphasis on decoding skills had a higher percentage of plotless stories; three that emphasize language and literature had more stories with an emphasis on plot structure.

One of the most recent studies on the effect that story structure has on the comprehension and recall of stories in basal readers was conducted by Brennan et al. (1986). Their subjects were 32 second-grade children from a predominantly middle class, suburban elementary school in a medium-sized city in the south central United States. The children were assigned to four groups,

each group receiving a well-structured version of a basal reader passage and a poorly-structured version of another basal reader passage. The order of presentation was counterbalanced for both story and structure. The well-structured passages were developed from the original basal passages and incorporated the six categories from the Stein and Glenn (1979) story grammar; events were linked by cause as well as by and and then connectives. The Harris-Jacobsen readability formula was used on all four passages, and all were within the low second-grade range. The subjects were tested individually. They read the target passages orally, retold what they remembered, and then responded to 12 probe questions. The same procedure was followed one week later on the alternate version of the other passage.

The study revealed: (a) In both the free recall and probed recall, the subjects who read the well-structured stories remembered more explicitly stated information than subjects who read the poorly-structured, original basal stories; (b) the subjects who read the well-structured stories were more apt to recall the explicit information in the correct sequence; (c) the well-strucutred passages were easier to comprehend, even though they were slightly more difficult than the poorly-structured passages, according to readability measures; and (d) subjects who read the poorly-structured passages made more incorrect inferences.

The authors drew three conclusions from the results of their study. Story structure makes an important contribution to

readers' comprehension and should be considered, along with traditional readability factors, by authors and publishers of beginning reading materials. In fact, stories in basal readers (at early levels) often hamper children's comprehension because of short sentences and repetition of vocabulary words with too little concern for predictable plots and sequence of events. Finally, if children have problems recalling stories, the problem may be with the text, not with children's reading ability.

Summary

Research supports the theory that children enter school with a sense of story that they use to comprehend and recall stories they hear or create themselves. In order to develop this story schema, teachers plan appropriate strategies and questioning techniques based on story grammar. Knowledge of story grammar makes children aware of the common features and common structures of stories, aids their comprehension and recall of stories, and also provides a framework for writing original stories or book reports. The stories in basal readers are the basis for the instruction of story grammar. Therefore, it is important that these stories be well-structured and of good literary quality, so that teachers can teach effectively.

CHAPTER 3

Methods and Procedures

The purpose of this study was to assess the differences in comprehension performance of seventh and eighth grade remedial reading students after they read a basal story revised to conform to a familiar story grammar and after they read the original basal story that did not conform to the organizational rules of a predictable story grammar. This chapter will describe the subjects, the instruments, and the procedures used in the study.

Subjects

Setting

The twelve seventh and eighth grade students who participated in this study attend Eric Smith Junior High School in Ramsey, New Jersey. Ramsey is located in Bergen County and is a predominantly white, middle-class suburban community. There are three grades at the junior high school--sixth, seventh, and eighth--and all classes are taught in traditional classroom settings.

Sample

The six male and six female subjects selected for the study are in a State Compensatory Education (SCE) remedial reading program. Four boys and four girls are in the eighth grade; two boys and two girls are in the seventh grade. According to the students' scores on the comprehension subtest of the Stanford Achievement Test (Grade 7 - Intermediate 2 level, Form F, 1982; Grade 8 - Advanced level, Form E, 1982), all students are performing at approximately

a fifth-sixth grade reading level.

Instruments

Description

Four instruments were used for this study--two basal reader stories and a revised version of each of these stories.

Original basal stories. The two original stories were published by the Houghton Mifflin Company in their 1979 basal reading series. The story, "The Great Penobscot Raid," was chosen from Keystone, the fifth grade basal text; "The Midnight Visitor" was chosen from Impressions, the sixth grade basal text. These stories were selected because students would have somewhat similar background knowledge of the subject matter. Since many elementary schools teach about Indians in reading or social studies classes, junior high school students would be expected to have similar prior knowledge when reading "The Great Penobscot Raid." Since mystery stories with surprise endings were studied in their remedial reading classes, students would be expected to have similar prior knowledge for this story genre and be able to apply it when reading "The Midnight Visitor." Another criterion for selection was story length. Both stories were an appropriate length, so each student could read one story and answer 10 questions within a normal 45 minute class period.

Although both of these selections were considered good stories, they were judged difficult to comprehend and recall because: (a) story grammar categories were either presented in an unpredictable

manner, or there was insufficient content information about characters and events; (b) intercategory connectives and and then were more prevalent than cause relation connectives; and (c) there were a few poorly constructed sentences in each story.

Revised basal stories. To remedy these shortcomings, both stories were restructured to conform to the Stein and Glenn (1979) story grammar. Stein and Glenn's grammar describes a story as consisting of two parts--the setting plus one or two episodes--and three types of intercategory connectives. The setting introduces the main character and relates the time, place, and context in which the events will occur. The episode system includes five categories: (a) the initiating event sets the story in motion and causes the main character to react in some way; (b) the internal response is the reaction of the character to the initiating event and motivates him to achieve a goal; (c) the attempt is an overt action or series of actions carried out to attain a goal; (d) the consequence is the event or action that notes attainment of the goal or failure; and (e) the reaction is an internal response that describes the feelings of the main character about the outcome (Olson, 1984). Stein and Glenn's grammar also includes three types of intercategory connectives--and, then, and cause. According to Brennan et al. (1986), "A well-formed story typically contains a series of embedded propositions connected by more cause relations than then relations" (p. 94).

When restructuring to conform to the Stein and Glenn story

grammar, I rewrote the beginning paragraphs of both stories. Categories high in the grammar hierarchy were presented in a more predictable manner, and content information was added so that the reader could better identify and empathize with the main character, or characters. Only minor revisions were made in the rest of both stories.

In the original story, "The Great Penobscot Raid" (see Appendix A), the main character was referred to as "the Penobscot captive" in the first sentence and then not mentioned by name (Menaagan) until the fourth paragraph. This seemed unnatural and contrived. The setting was also unclear. If Menaagan was a captive, why was she outside the palisade? Other content information was missing. Why was Menaagan a captive? Why was she collecting firewood? Why was the belt on the path such a significant initiating event? The reader could not appreciate Menaagan's situation and internal response to the belt unless more content information was supplied. In an extra paragraph in the revised version (see Appendix B), background material on Menaagan's desperate situation was added, which answered these questions and clarified the motivations and goals of the main character.

In the original story, "The Midnight Visitor" (see Appendix C), the setting (Paris) was lost in a paragraph that included other proper nouns, and there was insufficient content information on the character of Fowler. Why was he so extremely disappointed

in Ausable? Why would Ausable, a spy working on a case, allow Fowler to follow him around? Why were both men going to the hotel room? In an extra paragraph in the revised version (see Appendix D), Fowler's character and motivation and also Ausable's mission were better explained. Furthermore, by the restructuring of the story lines in both stories, the plots were developed in a more predictable manner.

In addition to the restructuring of both stories, more cause relation connectives were added. In the revised version of "The Great Penobscot Raid" (see Appendix B), the Mohawks raided the Penobscot village because they could not settle their differences peacefully; Menaagan was collecting firewood because she was a prisoner and, therefore, had to do whatever work the Mohawks told her to do; and the belt could not be picked up by Menaagan because the Mohawks were not merely lounging at the gate but guarding prisoners like her who worked outside the palisade.

In the revised version of "The Midnight Visitor" (see Appendix D), Fowler was in Paris to interview Ausable because he was sent on the assignment by his magazine; the two men were on their way to Ausable's hotel room because that was where Ausable had the appointment to meet another agent; and Fowler was disappointed because he was in a romantic city with a famous spy and only ordinary, unexciting things were happening to him.

Both stories have a few poorly constructed sentences. One example from the original basal story "The Great Penobscot Raid"

(see Appendix A, p.56) is: "The women of the various families in the long house where she lived seemed to notice nothing, and she managed to do her work as usual." This was changed in the revised version (see Appendix B, p.62) to: "Throughout the day Menaagan did her usual work, and the other women in the long house seemed to notice nothing different about her behavior."

An example of poor construction and lack of ordinary usage is found in the original story, "The Midnight Visitor" (see Appendix C, p.71): "And then, as he dropped, he screamed once, shrilly." This was changed in the revised version (see Appendix D, p.77) to: "As he dropped, he let out one, shrill scream."

Questions. After revising both stories, 10 questions were designed that would reconstruct the story according to Stein and Glenn's story grammar categories (see Appendix E and F). There were five literal and five inferential questions for each story; some were devised by this researcher and others were taken from the teachers' manuals.

Validity

Content validity was established for the 10 questions. Three reading professors from the graduate school teaching staff reviewed the suitability of the questions and their correct placement under the six categories of the Stein and Glenn story grammar.

Reliability

Intrarater reliability was established at .93 after a review

of the scoring one week later.

Interrater reliability was provided for by having a colleague also score student answer sheets. Four answer sheets were randomly selected (one from each of the four story versions), and each of us scored the answers independently. The proportion of agreement between scores was .97.

Procedures

Description

Twelve students, each reading on a fifth-sixth grade reading level, were selected and assigned to one of four groupings. A stratified random sampling procedure was used to assign two eighth graders and one seventh grader to each of the four groups. Each group was given a well-structured version of one story and a poorly-structured version of another story. The order of presentation was counterbalanced for both story and structure, and students were unaware of whether they were reading a well-structured or a poorly-structured story.

Group 1 read the well-structured version of Story A first and then the poorly-structured version of Story B; Group 2 read the poorly-structured version of Story A first and then the well-structured version of Story B; Group 3 read the well-structured version of Story B first and then the poorly-structured version of Story A; and Group 4 read the poorly-structured version of Story B followed by the well-structured version of Story A. Thus, Group 4 read the same

selections as Group 1 but in reversed order; whereas Group 3 read the same selections as Group 2 but in reversed order.

Before reading the stories, the students were given the meanings of vocabulary words that might be new to them. One word (palisade) was explained for "The Great Penobscot Raid" story, and five words (espionage, prosaic, discomfited, inflection, and gendarmes) were explained for "The Midnight Visitor" story. All students received vocabulary word meanings, whether they were reading well-structured or poorly-structured stories. After reading the stories, students answered the questions without referring back to text.

Two 45 minute periods were required for this study. During the first period, students read their first story and answered 10 questions. A few days later, they read their second story and answered 10 questions. Since students were participating during their normal class period, they were seen in small groups of two or three.

Student's answers were evaluated using a three-point rating scale. Two points were given for a correct response, one point for a partial answer, and no points for an incorrect response.

Collection of data

The data collected were the answers to 10 questions about two stories from each of the 12 students participating in the study.

Treatment of data

The data were examined to assess the importance of structure on

students' comprehension and recall of stories. The scores received on the well-structured and poorly-structured versions of the two stories were subjected to a t test for independent means with significance set at the .05 level.

Summary

This chapter described the methods and procedures used to assess the comprehension and recall of 12 junior high school students after they read a poorly-structured basal reader story and after they read a well-structured, rewritten version of a basal story. Setting and sample were discussed and also the instruments that were used. Two 45 minute class periods were required to complete the data gathering for this study.

CHAPTER 4

Results

The purpose of this study was to assess the differences in comprehension performance of students after they read a basal story revised to conform to a familiar story grammar and after they read the original basal story that did not conform to a predictable story grammar. Twelve seventh and eighth grade remedial reading students, all performing at approximately a fifth-sixth grade reading level, participated in the study. Students participated during their normal class period in small groups of two or three; two 45 minute periods were required.

A stratified random sampling procedure was used to assign two eighth graders and one seventh grader to each of four groups. Each group was given a well-structured version of one basal story and a poorly-structured version of another basal story. The order of presentation was counterbalanced for both story and structure. Students' prior knowledge of the subject matter was considered when selecting the stories to be restructured, and unfamiliar vocabulary words were explained to all students reading well-structured or poorly-structured story versions. These procedures--counterbalancing, consideration of prior knowledge, and the explanation of vocabulary words--were followed to minimize the effects of factors other than structure that would affect comprehension and recall.

After reading both stories, students answered 10 questions,

five literal and five inferential for each story, that were designed to reconstruct the story according to the categories of the Stein and Glenn story grammar. Questions were answered without referring back to text. Students' answers were evaluated using a three-point rating scale.

Results of the Study

To assess the importance of structure on students' comprehension and recall of stories, the scores received on the well-structured and poorly-structured versions of the two stories were subjected to a *t* test for independent means.

Results: "The Great Penobscot Raid"

As seen in Table 1, the six students who read the well-structured version of "The Great Penobscot Raid" answered significantly more literal ($\bar{X}$ = 8.00) and inferential ($\bar{X}$ = 6.83) questions than did the six students who read the original, poorly-structured version (Literal $\bar{X}$ = 4.67; Inferential $\bar{X}$ = 4.50). For the literal questions, the difference was significant at the .01 level; for the inferential questions, the difference was significant at the .02 level.

Discussion: "The Great Penobscot Raid"

Results indicate that the subjects who read the well-structured version of the story answered significantly more questions correctly than subjects who read the poorly-structured version. These findings concur with those of previous studies (Stein & Glenn, 1979; Thorndyke, 1977; Whaley, 1981) in that

Table 1

Means and t-scores: "The Great Penobscot Raid"

N=12

	Well-Structured	Poorly-Structured	t-score	Significance
Literal	8.00 (1.66)	4.67 (.90)	4.32	$p<.01$
Inferential	6.83 (1.60)	4.50 (1.17)	3.09	$p<.02$

Table 2

Means and t-scores: "The Midnight Visitor"

N=12

	Well-Structured	Poorly-Structured	t-score	Significance
Literal	7.50 (1.44)	4.83 (1.60)	3.03	$p<.02$
Inferential	5.17 (1.55)	4.67 (1.58)	.56	NS

readers have better comprehension and recall of stories that conform to their expectations and have predictable structures.

This study also supports Brennan et al. (1986) in two areas: (a) Subjects who read the well-structured story remembered more explicitly stated information than subjects who read the poorly-structured story, and (b) the well-structured stories were easier to comprehend, even though they were slightly longer and contained more vocabulary words than the poorly-structured stories. Restructuring and adding content information aided, rather than hindered, the comprehension of the reader (Brennan et al., 1986; Pearson, 1974-75).

The well-structured stories also had other characteristics of good stories, such as continuity, coherence, and the use of ordinary language. These characteristics were considered important in the research of Bettelheim and Zelan (1981, 1982), Brennan et al. (1986), and Steinberg and Bruce (1980).

The findings from this story support the results from other research studies. Comprehension and recall were improved with well-structured stories that conformed to readers' expectations, or schemata, for well-formed stories.

Results: "The Midnight Visitor"

As seen in Table 2, the students who read the well-structured version of "The Midnight Visitor" answered significantly more literal questions ($\bar{X}$ = 7.50) than did the students who read the poorly-structured version ($\bar{X}$ = 4.83). For the inference

questions, while those reading the well-structured version showed a mean score of 5.17 which was higher than that produced by those reading the poorly-structured story ($\bar{X}$ = 4.67), the difference was not significant.

Discussion: "The Midnight Visitor"

Results indicate that the subjects who read the well-structured version of this story answered significantly more literal questions correctly than subjects who read the poorly-structured version. These findings agree with studies mentioned in the previous Discussion section of this report (Bettelheim & Zelan, 1981, 1982; Brennan et al., 1986; Pearson, 1974-75; Stein & Glenn, 1979; Steinberg & Bruce, 1980; Thorndyke, 1977; Whaley, 1981).

Results indicate that the subjects who read the well-structured version of the story answered more inferential questions correctly, but the results were not significant. These results tend to support the research of Dreher and Singer (1980) and Sebesta et al. (1982). Both of these studies found that learning to identify explicitly the structure of a story did not increase the comprehension and recall of fifth grade students. However, both of these studies were concerned with the direct teaching of story grammar, not the comprehension and recall of students after reading well-structured and poorly-structured stories.

Perhaps the reason the inferential results were not

significant for this story was because the inferencing required was much more difficult for remedial reading students. The reader had to put himself in Ausable's situation and "think" like him in order to understand that the mention of a balcony was merely a ploy to outsmart Max, his enemy. Mandler and Johnson (1977), McConaughy (1982), and Stein and Glenn (1979) state that better readers have a more developed sense of story that allows them to make inferences concerning the internal states and motivations of the characters. Poor readers, however, have more difficulty at this level.

General Observations

The following observations can be made by examining the means of the scores of both tests (see Table 1 and Table 2): (a) The original stories were approximately equal in difficulty for the students (the means of the poorly-structured stories were very close--a low of 4.50 to a high of 4.83, a range of 33 points); (b) the restructuring of the stories improved the students' performance (the lowest mean of 5.17 on the well-structured story versus the highest mean of 4.83 on the poorly-structured story, a range of 34 points); and (c) the restructuring of the stories improved the performance of some students much more than it did others (the lowest mean on the well-structured story was 5.17 versus the highest mean of 8.00 on the well-structured story, a range of 283 points, and the highest mean on the well-structured story was 8.00 versus the highest mean of 4.83 on the

poorly-structured story, a range of 317 points).

This study reveals that junior high school students in a remedial reading program comprehended stories revised to conform to a familiar story grammar better than stories that did not have a predictable structure. Improvement in inferential comprehension on one of the stories, however, was not significant.

CHAPTER 5

Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Summary

In recent years there has been growing support for the interactive model of reading which states that readers use both prior knowledge and the text to get meaning from print. Prior knowledge has an important role in the comprehension of narratives. Research has indicated that children who have prior knowledge, or schemata, for the structure of stories comprehend and recall stories better than children who do not have the schemata. In addition, children who understand story structure produce stories that have increased quality and creativity. One of the ways to increase story schemata and improve comprehension is to teach children to attend to the parts of a well-formed story, using a story grammar approach. To do this, teachers need well-structured stories that adhere to predictable grammars.

Since basal readers are used for 94% of classroom instruction and are also used for remedial reading instruction, it is important that their stories be well-structured and have literary quality. During the past five years, however, basals have been criticized for their lack of structure, coherence, and general storiness features. The results of this study will add to the current literature concerning the presence or absence of story structure in basal reader stories.

Conclusions

The purpose of this study was to assess the differences in comprehension performance of seventh and eighth grade remedial reading students after they read a basal story revised to conform to a familiar story grammar and after they read a basal story that does not conform to a predictable story grammar.

The results of this study indicate that students comprehended the revised, well-structured stories better than the original, poorly-structured basal stories. The findings were significant for both stories on the literal questions, but were significant for only one story on the inferential questions. The major conclusion from the study is that structure was a very important factor in the students' comprehension of the stories that were presented.

Perhaps further research on this topic could be done using a larger sample, or a different age group, or using children who are not in a remedial reading situation.

Recommendations

To Teachers

The results indicate the importance of providing children with well-structured stories. When choosing a basal series for a school system, teachers in cooperation with administrators, should include structure as one of the main criteria for selection. Morrow (1982) examined six basal series for structure and found that three out of six series had a high percentage of plotless

stories. When children have trouble understanding what they read, the problem may be the text, not the children's reading ability.

In the classroom teachers should choose well-formed stories in order to teach story schema awareness. Good story models are myths, legends, fables, and fairytales, because their structure is fairly clear (Gordon & Braun, 1983). For story grammar instruction, teachers need to practice analyzing and diagramming stories. Some stories may need rewriting or revising to make them more meaningful to children. Teachers can also help children achieve their expectations about stories by questioning them appropriately. This involves using question outlines based on story grammar and choosing only those questions that best reconstruct the story (Guthrie, 1977).

Other strategies to increase children's sense of story include reading aloud, retelling, dramatics, writing original stories or book reports using story grammar as a framework, and providing children with plenty of opportunities to experience all types of stories (Whaley, 1981).

To Authors

Since story structure makes such an important contribution to the comprehension of stories, authors should pay as much attention to the structure of the stories they write as they do to sentence length and choice of vocabulary. Also, aspects of good stories, such as coherence, conflict, and surprise, should not be sacrificed in order to make stories fit readability formulas

(Brennan et al., 1986).

Another suggestion concerns poetic license. Perhaps poetic license (phrases that are not complete sentences, sentences that begin with and or but, and the use of language that is not everyday, ordinary usage) should only be used when writing for mature audiences, not when writing for children who are still learning how to correctly speak, read, and write the language. Children can not fulfill their expectations about the structure of stories, if either unfamiliar usage or unfamiliar structure interferes (Bettelheim & Zelan, 1981, 1982).

To Publishers

Publishers have an obligation to provide the best reading material possible to school systems, teachers, and most of all, children. When choosing stories for basal reading series, they should look at structure and literary quality, along with traditional readability factors (Brennan et al., 1986). Research indicates that adding vocabulary words and grammatical complexity often aids comprehension (Bettelheim & Zelan, 1981; Pearson, 1974-75).

Publishers should also be made aware that basal reader stories not only influence children's comprehension and recall but also their writing. Eckhoff (1983) found that when children do creative writing, they use linguistic structures similar to the structures they find in their particular basal text--the more complex the text, the more elaborate their writing style. This is

one more reason for teachers, authors, and publishers to work together to produce basal stories that help improve reading and writing, not hamper it.

References

Applebee, A.N. (1978). The child's concept of story: Ages two to seventeen. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Applebee, A.N. (1980). Children's narratives: New directions. The Reading Teacher, 34, 137-142.

Bettelheim, B., & Zelan, K. (1981, November). Why children don't like to read. The Atlantic Monthly, pp. 25-31.

Bettelheim, B., & Zelan, K. (1982). On learning to read. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.

Brennan, A.D., Bridge, C.A., & Winograd, P.N. (1986). The effects of structural variation on children's recall of basal reader stories. Reading Research Quarterly, 21 (1), 91-104.

Dewitz, P.A., & Tackett, S.A. (1981, December). Teaching story grammars: For which student for how long? Paper presented at the National Reading Conference, Dallas, Texas.

Dreher, M.J., & Singer, H. (1980). Story grammar instruction unnecessary for intermediate grade students. The Reading Teacher, 34, 261-268.

Durkin, D. (1978-79). What classroom observation reveals about reading comprehension. Reading Research Quarterly, 14 (4), 481-533.

Eckhoff, B. (1983). How reading affects children's writing. Language Arts, 60, 607-616.

Fowler, G.L. (1982). Developing comprehension skills in primary students through the use of story frames. The Reading Teacher, 36, 176-179.

Golden, J.M. (1984). Children's concept of story in reading and writing. The Reading Teacher, 37, 578-584.

Gordon, C.J., & Braun, C. (1983). Using story schema as an aid to reading and writing. The Reading Teacher, 37, 116-121.

Guthrie, J.T. (1977). Story comprehension. The Reading Teacher, 30, 574-577.

Harris, A.J., & Sipay, E.R. (1980). How to increase reading ability: A guide to developmental and remedial methods (7th ed.). New York: Longman Inc.

Harris, T.L., & Hodges, R.E. (1981). The dictionary of reading and related terms. Newark, Delaware: International Reading Association.

Mandler, J.M., & Johnson, N.S. (1977). Remembrance of things parsed: Story structure and recall. Cognitive Psychology, 9, 111-151.

Marshall, N. (1983). Using story grammars to assess reading comprehension. The Reading Teacher, 36, 616-620.

McConaughy, S.H. (1982). Developmental changes in story comprehension and levels of questioning. Language Arts, 59, 580-589.

McNeil, J.D. (1984). Reading comprehension: New directions for classroom practice. Glenview, Illinois: Scott, Foresman and Company.

Morrow, L.M. (1982). Story structures represented in selections of primary basal readers. Reading Improvement, 19, 194-199.

Morrow, L.M. (1985). Reading and retelling stories: Strategies for emergent readers. The Reading Teacher, 38, 870-875.

Nolte, R.Y., & Singer, H. (1985). Active comprehension: Teaching a process of reading comprehension and its effects on reading achievement. The Reading Teacher, 39, 24-31.

Olson, M.W. (1984). A dash of story grammar and...Presto! A book report. The Reading Teacher, 37, 458-461.

Pearson, P.D. (1974-75). The effects of grammatical complexity on children's comprehension, recall, and conception of certain semantic relations. Reading Research Quarterly, 10 (2), 155-192.

Pearson, P.D. (1985). Changing the face of reading comprehension instruction. The Reading Teacher, 38, 724-738.

Rand, M.K. (1984). Story schema: Theory, research and practice. The Reading Teacher, 37, 377-382.

Rumelhart, D.E. (1977). Toward an interactive model of reading. In S. Dornic (Ed.), Attention and performance VI (pp. 573-603). Hillsdale, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Rumelhart, D.E. (1978). Understanding and summarizing brief stories. In D. LaBerge & S.J. Samuels (Eds.), Basic processess in reading: Perception and comprehension (pp. 265-303). Hillsdale, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Sadow, M.W. (1982, September). Using story grammar to design comprehension questions for readers. The Education Digest, pp. 62-64.

Sebesta, S.L., Calder, J.W., & Cleland, L.N. (1982). A story grammar for the classroom. The Reading Teacher, 36, 180-184.

Shannon, P. (1982). Some subjective reasons for teachers' reliance on commercial reading materials. The Reading Teacher, 35, 884-889.

Spiegel, D.L. (1985, October/November). A story grammar approach to reading and writing. Reading Today, p. 13.

Stahl-Gemake, J., & Guastello, F. (1984). Using story grammar with students of English as a foreign language to compose original fairy and folktales. The Reading Teacher, 38, 213-216.

Stein, N.L., & Glenn, C.G. (1979). An analysis of story comprehension in elementary school children. In R.O. Freedle (Ed.), New directions in discourse processing (pp. 53-120). Norwood, New Jersey: Ablex.

Steinberg, C.S., & Bruce, C.B. (1980). Higher level features in children's stories: Rhetorical structure and conflict. In M.L. Kamil & A.J. Moe (Eds.), Perspectives on reading research and instruction. Twenty-ninth yearbook of the National Reading Conference (pp. 117-125). Washington, DC: National Reading Conference.

Strickland, D.S., & Feeley, J.T. (1985). Using children's concept of story to improve reading and writing. In T.L. Harris & E.J. Cooper (Eds.), Reading, thinking, and concept development (pp. 163-173). New York: College Entrance Examination Board.

Thorndyke, P.W. (1977). Cognitive structures in comprehension and memory of narrative discourse. Cognitive Psychology, 9, 77-110.

Whaley, J.F. (1981). Story grammars and reading instruction. The Reading Teacher, 34, 762-771.

Appendix A

Original Basal Story

The Great Penobscot Raid

By Kay Hill

The Penobscot captive walked back to the Mohawk palisade with an armload of firewood, and as she passed the shocks of corn, she noticed something lying on the ground. The white and purple pattern stood out sharply against the yellow bleached grass, and she bent to look at it more closely. Her heart gave a tremendous leap. It was a belt of spruce-root fibers she had woven for her husband, Pulwaugh, long ago when both were happy in their home in the Penobscot country. She recognized both the dye and the pattern.

What was it doing here in the Mohawk land, far from their Penobscot village where Pulwaugh had been struck down? Did this mean that he was alive after all, somewhere close at hand? Had he left the belt in the path to warn her of his presence? It must be! Should she pick it up? No. The Mohawks lounging at the gate might notice. Menaagan walked on, and entered the palisade of wooden stakes.

What did Pulwaugh want her to do? Was he alone or with a war party? Was she to wait in the long house for him to come for her? Surely not. The long house would be crowded with Mohawk families. Then did he want her to come to that place where the belt was after the camp was asleep? Much more likely! It would

not be easy to creep away without being seen, but she would try. How they would get away from Mohawk territory, she could not imagine. She must leave that to Pulwaugh.

Menaagan passed through the gate, not hurrying, trying to appear the usual silent and unhappy prisoner. She must wait through the long day and not allow the enemy to suspect that her heart was dancing with hope.

The women of the various families in the long house where she lived seemed to notice nothing, and she managed to do her work as usual. At last the sun slipped down behind the trees, and Menaagan seated herself in the doorway of the house with some mending. As the blue of the evening deepened to black, the people came in and prepared for bed. Soon they would all be asleep. Fortunately, it was not the custom of the Mohawks to set guards at night, for they had no fear of being surprised in their own strong village. Menaagan would be able to creep away quietly as soon as the moon--

What was that! A sudden uproar at the gate set the dogs barking.

Menaagan's heart sank like a stone. Six Mohawk warriors entered the palisade with a pair of prisoners--Pulwaugh and Nokum, her brother. She sat very still as they passed, and Pulwaugh's eyes stared past her, showing no recognition. She knew therefore that she must pretend not to know him. When the Mohawk chief summoned her, she went with a calm, indifferent face.

"Woman, these men speak a Wabanaki dialect," the chief said. "You, a Penobscot, may understand them. Ask what they are doing here and if they are alone."

Menaagan put the question quietly, and Pulwaugh answered with a taunting smile.

"Four moons past, the Mohawks paid our tribe a visit. We have grown lonely for our friends and have to return the compliment."

The Mohawks moved uneasily when they heard the translation, for this was the roundabout Indian way of saying the Wabanaki men had come with a war party to seek revenge. Menaagan was told to ask how many braves were in the party and how far off they were encamped, but this the prisoners refused to answer.

"Very well," said the Mohawk chief, "you have from the setting of the sun to its rising." And he ordered the captives tied to stakes in the center of the palisade.

Menaagan was obliged to follow the others back to the long house without so much as a glance at her husband and brother. Her heart was sore, for their fate was now certain. Their scouts failing to return by morning, the Penobscot war party would assume the enemy was warned, and they would not risk an attack. There might not even be a war party! Pulwaugh and her brother might have come alone. The more she thought about it, the more she was sure this was so.

She resumed her place by the door and sewed with trembling

fingers. Anything that might be done must be done by her alone. Should she try to set them free? If she succeeded, it would be only a brief respite. They would be overtaken and brought back. Yet something must be attempted before it was too late! Time was passing. Menaagan tried to come to a decision.

A mosquito buzzed loudly in her right ear and she brushed it away. It came again on her other side and buzzed louder than ever, and suddenly she found herself listening with strained attention. It was a voice speaking in her own tongue!

"Menaagan, my daughter," were the words she heard, "do as I tell you. They may yet be saved." It was the voice of the Great Chief Glooscap! "Collect all the moccasins and hide them. Tie strings across all the doorways. Then go and cut the prisoners' bonds. Tell them to go outside and stand at the gate, making a great noise. At the last moment, go and pour water on all the fires. You understand?" Menaagan nodded breathlessly, and the mosquito circled and disappeared with a whine into the night.

Menaagan rose with fast-beating heart. It was quiet now except for the light crackle of the campfire and the cry of a nightbird. The people slept. Moving like a shadow, the Penobscot woman crept about gathering up the Mohawks' moccasins. When she had them all, she hid them under a pile of skins. Then she stole about tying strings of rawhide across all the doorways. For good measure, she scattered sharp stones on the ground. A woman

stirred in her sleep, murmuring, and Menaagan stood like a rock. A brave turned over with a grunt. Then all was still again.

Menaagan ran to the prisoners and whispered to them what they must do, at the same time cutting the cords that bound them. Arming themselves with sticks from the pile of firewood, Pulwaugh and Nokum slipped out through the gate and waited for the signal. Menaagan was back in the long house now, lifting the heavy bark vessels and pouring water on the fires. The flames scattered and went out with a hiss of steam, and the woman fled into the darkness.

The Mohawks awoke with muttered cries and felt in vain for their moccasins. The steamy air confused them and they crashed into each other in the dark. Then from outside came the frightening sound of Penobscot war cries. The two young men were each making as much noise as ten, whooping and beating their clubs against the palisade. Now the dogs began to add their barking to the rumpus and the children to cry. It sounded to the Mohawks as though they were being attacked by an entire army.

Feeling in the dark for weapons, they rushed out of the long house only to trip over the strings and fall headlong. Picking themselves up, they danced as the sharp stones cut their feet, and they struck blindly at shapes in the steamy darkness, thinking they struck at the enemy. In their excitement, they confused friend with foe, and soon nearly half the Mohawk braves were stretched on the ground, every one struck down by a friend. Those

who were left started for the gate, but the Penobscots were waiting, their eyes accustomed to the gloom, their clubs ready. As each Mohawk emerged through the narrow gateway, the sky seemed to fall on him. One after another, the Mohawks were dispatched in this way until only the three Penobscots stood on their own feet.

"Quickly now--to the river," whispered Pulwaugh, and taking Menaagan's hand, he led her to the shore where Nokum drew the canoe out of hiding and launched it. Swiftly in the darkness they crossed the stream. Then the two men bore it to the next stream, Menaagan carrying paddles and blankets, and so on, until they reached their own country seven days later.

"But didn't the Mohawks come after you?" asked their friends at home in amazement.

"No," said they, and only Glooscap knew why.

It was some hours before all the Mohawks had picked themselves up from the ground and recovered from ringing headaches, but when they had, they congratulated themselves on their narrow escape. "What a terrible battle," they said. "The enemy must have numbered thousands to attack us like that in our own village! We beat them off, of course, but it was fortunate we were not all killed." And for years they talked of the Great Penobscot Raid, never knowing that the raiding army consisted of two men and one brave woman.

And so--kespeadooksit--the story ends.

Appendix B

Revised Basal Story

The Great Penobscot Raid

By Kay Hill

While Menaagan was collecting firewood outside the Mohawk palisade, she thought about how much her life had changed. She and her husband, Pulwaugh, had been so happy living in their home in the Penobscot country. However, when the Penobscots and the Mohawks could no longer settle their differences peacefully, the Mohawks raided their village. Many friends and relatives, including Pulwaugh, were struck down and killed. Others, like Menaagan, were captured and taken to the Mohawk village. Because they were prisoners, they had to collect firewood or do whatever other work the Mohawks told them to do.

When Menaagan had an armload of firewood, she started to walk back to the Mohawk palisade. As she was passing the shocks of corn, she noticed something lying on the ground. The white and purple pattern stood out sharply against the yellow, bleached grass. When she bent to look at it more closely, she recognized both the dye and the pattern. Her heart gave a tremendous leap! It was a belt of spruce-root fibers she had woven for Pulwaugh.

What was the belt doing here in Mohawk land, far from their Penobscot village where Pulwaugh had been struck down? Did this mean that he was alive after all, somewhere close at hand? Had he left the belt where he knew she would find it to warn her of

his presence? It must be! Should she pick it up? No. The Mohawks lounging at the gate were guarding her and would notice. Menaagan walked on, and entered the palisade of wooden stakes.

What did Pulwaugh want her to do? Was he alone or with a war party? Was she to wait in the long house with the other Mohawk families until he came for her? Surely not. It would be too difficult to get inside both the palisade and then the house. Then, did he want her to come to the place where the belt was after the camp was asleep? Much more likely! It would not be easy to creep away without being seen, but she would try. How they would get away from Mohawk territory, she could not imagine. She must leave that to Pulwaugh. For the rest of the day Menaagan would have to appear to be the usual silent and unhappy prisoner. She must not allow the enemy to suspect that her heart was dancing with hope.

Throughout the day Menaagan did her usual work, and the other women in the long house seemed to notice nothing different about her behavior. At last the sun slipped down behind the trees. Seated in the doorway with her mending, Menaagan watched as the blue of the evening deepened to black, and people came in and prepared for bed. Soon they would all be asleep. Fortunately, it was not the custom of the Mohawks to have guards at night, for they had no fear of being surprised in their own, strong village. Menaagan would be able to creep away quietly as soon as the moon--

What was that? A sudden uproar at the gate made the dogs

start barking.

Menaagan's heart sank like a stone. Pulwaugh and her brother, Nokum, were being led into the palisade by six Mohawk warriors. She sat very still. As they passed by, Pulwaugh's eyes stared past her, showing no recognition. She knew, therefore, that she must pretend not to know him. Then, the chief of the Mohawks summoned her. She went with a calm, indifferent face.

"Woman," the chief said, "these men speak the Wabanaki dialect of the Penobscots. You, a Penobscot, may understand them. Ask them what they are doing here and if they are alone."

Menaagan put the question quietly, and Pulwaugh answered with a taunting smile.

"Four moons past, the Mohawks paid our tribe a visit. We have grown lonely for our friends and have come to return the compliment."

The Mohawks moved uneasily when they heard the translation, for this was the roundabout Indian way of saying the Wabanaki men had come with a war party to seek revenge. Menaagan was told to ask how many braves were in the party and how far off they were encamped. This the prisoners refused to answer.

"Very well," said the Mohawk chief, "you have from the setting of the sun to its rising to tell us what we ask, or you will die." Then, he ordered that the captives be tied to stakes in the center of the palisade.

Menaagan was obliged to follow the others back to the long

house without so much as a glance at her husband and brother. Her heart was sore, for their fate was now certain. If their scouts failed to return by morning, the Penobscot war party would assume the enemy was warned, and they would not risk an attack. There might not even be a war party! Pulwaugh and her brother might have come alone. The more she thought about it, the more she was sure this was so.

She resumed her place by the door and sewed with trembling fingers. Anything that must be done must be done by her alone. Should she try to set them free? If she succeeded, it would be only a brief respite. They would surely be overtaken and brought back. Yet something must be attempted before it was too late! Time was passing. Menaagan tried to come to a decision.

Suddenly, a mosquito appeared and buzzed loudly in her right ear. Annoyed, she brushed it away, but it came on her other side and buzzed louder than ever. Then, she found herself listening with strained attention, because the buzzing had changed to a voice speaking in her own tongue!

"Menaagan, my daughter," were the words she heard, "do as I tell you. They may yet be saved." Menaagan recognized the voice as that of the Great Chief Glooscap! "Collect all the moccasins and hide them. Tie strings across all the doorways. Then, go and cut the prisoners' bonds. Tell them to go outside and stand at the gate, making a great noise. At the last moment, go and pour water on all the fires. Do you understand?" Menaagan nodded

breathlessly, and the mosquito, with a whine, circled and disappeared into the night.

Menaagan rose with fast-beating heart. It was quiet now, except for the light crackle of the campfires and the cry of a nightbird. The people slept. Moving like a shadow, Menaagan crept about gathering up the Mohawks' moccasins. When she had them all, she hid them under a pile of animal skins. Then, she stole about tying strings of rawhide across all the doorways. For good measure, she scattered sharp stones on the ground. When she heard a woman murmur in her sleep and a man grunt as he turned over, Menaagan stood quietly like a rock. Then, all was still again.

Menaagan ran to the prisoners and whispered to them what they must do. At the same time, she cut the cords that bound them. After arming themselves with sticks from the pile of firewood, Pulwaugh and Nokum slipped out through the gate and waited for the signal. In the meantime, Menaagan was back at the long house lifting the heavy, bark vessels and pouring water on the fires. The flames scattered and went out with a hiss of steam. Then, Menaagan fled into the darkness, carefully avoiding the areas with the sharp stones.

When Pulwaugh and Nokum saw Menaagan pass through the gate to the outside, they knew this was their signal to begin the war cries. The two young men made as much noise as ten, whooping and beating their clubs against the palisade. The Mohawks awoke with

muttered cries and felt in vain for their moccasins. The steamy air confused them, and they crashed into each other in the dark. Then, the dogs began to add their barking to the rumpus, and the children started to cry. It sounded to the Mohawks as though they were being attacked by an entire army.

Feeling in the dark for weapons, the Mohawks rushed out of the long house only to trip over the strings and fall headlong. Picking themselves up, they danced as the sharp stones cut their feet, and they struck blindly at shapes in the steamy darkness, thinking they struck at the enemy. In their excitement, they confused friend with foe. Soon nearly half the Mohawk braves were stretched on the ground, each struck down by a friend. Those who were left standing started for the gate, but the Penobscots were waiting, their eyes accustomed to the darkness, their clubs ready. As each Mohawk emerged through the narrow gateway, the sky seemed to fall on him. One after another, the Mohawks were dispatched in this way until only the three Penobscots stood on their own feet.

"Quickly, now--to the river," whispered Pulwaugh. Taking Menaagan's hand, he led her to the shore where Nokum drew the canoe out of hiding and launched it. Swiftly in the darkness they crossed the stream. Then, the two men bore it to the next stream, Menaagan carrying paddles and blankets, and so on, until they reached their own country seven days later.

When they finally got home, their friends asked in amazement,

"But didn't the Mohawks come after you?"

"No," they said. They didn't know why. Only Glooscap knew why the Mohawks hadn't followed the three Penobscots.

It was a few hours before all the Mohawks had picked themselves up from the ground and recovered from their ringing headaches. When they did recover, they stood around congratulating themselves on their narrow escape. "What a terrible battle," they said. "The enemy must have numbered thousands to attack us like that in our own village! We beat them off, of course, but it was fortunate we were not all killed." For years they talked of the Great Penobscot Raid, never knowing that the raiding army consisted of two men and one brave woman.

So--kespeadooksit--the story ends.

Appendix C

Original Basal Story

The Midnight Visitor

By Robert Arthur

Ausable (aw' zuh-buhl) did not fit any description of a secret agent Fowler had ever read. Following him down the musty corridor of the gloomy French hotel where Ausable had a room, Fowler felt let down. It was a small room, on the sixth and top floor, and scarcely a setting for a figure of romantic adventure. But Ausable, in his wrinkled business suit badly in need of cleaning, could hardly be called a romantic figure.

He was, for one thing, fat. Very fat. And then there was his accent. Though he spoke French and German passably, he had never altogether lost the New England twang he had brought to Paris from Boston twenty years before.

"You are disappointed," Ausable said wheezily over his shoulder. "You were told that I was a secret agent, a spy, dealing in espionage and danger. You wished to meet me because you are a writer, young and romantic. You envisioned mysterious figures in the night, the crack of pistols, drugs in the wine.

"Instead, you have spent a dull evening in a French music hall with a sloppy fat man who, instead of having messages slipped into his hand by dark-eyed beauties, gets only a prosaic telephone call making an appointment in his room. You have been bored!"

The fat man chuckled to himself as he unlocked the door of his room and stood aside to let his discomfited guest enter.

"You are disillusioned," Ausuable told him. "But take cheer, my young friend. Presently you will see a paper, a quite important paper for which several men have risked their lives, come to me in the next-to-the-last step of its journey into official hands. Some day soon that paper may well affect the course of history. In that thought there is drama, is there not?"

As he spoke, Ausable closed the door behind him. Then he switched on the light.

And as the light came on, Fowler had his first authentic thrill of the day. For halfway across the room, a small automatic in his hand, stood a man.

Ausable blinked a few times.

"Max," he wheezed, "you gave me a start. I thought you were in Berlin. What are you doing here in my room?"

Max was slender, a little less than tall, with features that suggested slightly the crafty pointed countenance of a fox. There was about him--aside from the gun--nothing especially menacing.

"The report," he murmured. "The report that is being brought you tonight on Russia's new missiles. I thought it would be safer in my hands than in yours."

Ausable moved to an armchair and sat down heavily.

"I'm going to raise the devil with the management this

time, and you can bet on it," he said grimly. "This is the second time in a month somebody has gotten into my room off that confounded balcony!"

Fowler's eyes went to the single window of the room. It was an ordinary window, against which now the night was pressing blackly.

"Balcony?" Max said, with a rising inflection. "No, a passkey. I did not know about the balcony. It might have saved me some trouble had I known."

"It's not my balcony," Ausable said with extreme irritation. "It belongs to the next apartment."

He glanced explanatorily to Fowler.

"You see," he said, "this room used to be part of a large unit, and the next room--through that door there--used to be the living room. It had the balcony, which extends under my window now.

"You can get onto it from the empty room two doors down--and somebody did, last month. The management promised me to block it off. But they haven't."

Max glanced at Fowler, who was standing stiffly a few feet from Ausable, and waved the gun with a commanding gesture.

"Please sit down," he suggested. "We have a wait of half an hour at least, I think."

"Thirty-one minutes," Ausable said moodily. "The appointment was for twelve-thirty. I wish I knew how you learned

about that report, Max."

"And we wish we knew how it was gotten out of Russia," Max replied. "However, no harm has been done. I will have it back--what is that?"

Unconsciously Fowler, who was still standing, had jumped at the sudden rapping on the door. Ausable yawned.

"The gendarmes," he said. "I thought that so important a paper as the one we are waiting for might well be given a little extra protection tonight."

Max bit his lip in uncertainty. The rapping was repeated.

"What will you do now, Max?" Ausable asked. "If I do not answer, they will enter anyway. The door is unlocked. And they will not hesitate to shoot."

The man's face was furious as he backed swiftly toward the window; with his hand behind him he flung it up and swung a leg over the sill.

"Send them away!" he rasped. "I will wait on the balcony. Send them away, or I'll shoot and take my chances!"

The rapping on the door became louder. And a voice was raised.

"Monsieur (muh-syoor')! Monsieur Ausable!"

The doorknob turned. Swiftly Max pushed his left hand to free himself from the sill and drop to the balcony outside. And then, as he dropped, he screamed once, shrilly.

The door opened and a waiter stood there with a tray, a bottle and two glasses.

"Monsieur, the drink you ordered for when you returned," he said, and set the tray upon the table, deftly uncorked the bottle, and retired.

Fowler stared after him.

"But--" he stammered, "the police--"

"There were no police." Ausable sighed. "Only Henri whom I was expecting."

"But won't that man out on the balcony--" Fowler began.

"No," Ausable said, "he won't return. You see, my young friend, there is no balcony."

Appendix D

Revised Basal Story

The Midnight Visitor

By Robert Arthur

Fowler, a writer for a magazine, had always wanted to interview a famous secret agent. Now he was getting his wish! He was in Paris to interview the famous American agent, Ausable (aw'-zuh-buhl), who was there working on a very important case. At present the two men were on their way to Ausable's hotel room to meet another agent. The agent would transfer a secret report to Ausable, who would then transfer it to an American government official.

Fowler knew he was fortunate to have this assignment, but he also could not help feeling let down. This was certainly not the romantic adventure he had anticipated. Here he was in Paris, one of the most exciting cities in Europe, but so far nothing exciting had happened to him or Ausable. Instead of the glamorous surroundings he had expected, both of them were walking down a musty corridor of a gloomy French hotel, where Ausable had a room on the sixth and top floor.

Ausable himself did not fit the description of any secret agent Fowler had ever seen in movies or read about in books. In his wrinkled business suit, which was badly in need of cleaning, Ausable could hardly be called a romantic figure. In addition, he was fat--very fat--and had a peculiar accent when he spoke.

Though he spoke French and German passably, he had never altogether lost his Boston accent.

"You are disappointed," Ausable said wheezily over his shoulder, as they walked along the narrow corridor. "You were told that I was a secret agent, a spy, who dealt in espionage and danger. You wished to meet me because you are a writer, young and romantic. You envisioned mysterious figures in the night, the crack of pistols, and drugs in the wine.

"Instead, you have spent a dull evening in a French music hall with a sloppy, fat man who, instead of having messages slipped into his hand by dark-eyed, beautiful women, gets only a prosaic telephone call from another agent wanting to meet him in his hotel room. You have been bored!"

The fat man chuckled to himself as he unlocked the door of his room and stood to let Fowler, his discomfited guest, enter.

"You are disillusioned," Ausable told him. "But cheer up, my young friend. Presently you will see a paper, a quite important paper for which several men have risked their lives, come to me in the next-to-the-last step of its journey into official hands. Some day soon that paper may well affect the course of history. In that thought there is drama, is there not?"

As he spoke, Ausable closed the door behind him. Then, he switched on the light.

As the light came on, Fowler had his first authentic thrill of

the day. Halfway across the room, a man stood holding an automatic in his hand.

Ausable blinked a few times.

"Max," he wheezed, "you gave me a start. I thought you were in Berlin. What would an enemy agent like yourself be doing in my room?"

Max was slender, a little less than tall, with facial features that suggested the crafty, pointed countenance of a fox. However, aside from the gun, there was nothing especially menancing about him.

"The report--" Max murmured. "I am here to intercept the report about Russia's new missiles that your fellow agent is bringing to you tonight. I thought it would be safer in my hands than in yours."

Ausable moved to an armchair and sat down heavily.

"I am going to raise the devil with the management of this hotel, and you can bet on it," he said grimly. This is the second time this month that somebody has gotten into my room from that confounded balcony!"

Fowler's eyes went to the single window of the room. He noticed that it was an ordinary window and that it was now dark outside.

"Balcony?" Max said, with a rising inflection. "No, I used a passkey. I did not know about the balcony. It might have saved me some trouble had I known."

"It's not my balcony," Ausable said with extreme irritation. "It belongs to the next apartment."

He glanced at Fowler and began to explain.

"You see," he said, "my room and the room next door used to be part of one large unit. The room next door--through that door there--used to be the living room. It had the balcony, which extends under my window now. You can get onto the balcony from the empty room two doors down, and somebody did last month. The management promised to block it off. But, they haven't."

Before Ausable could say anymore, Max interrupted and told Fowler, who was still standing a few feet from Ausable, to sit down. "We have a wait of half an hour at least," he said.

"Thirty-one minutes," Ausable said moodily. "The appointment was for twelve-thirty. I wish I knew how you learned about that report, Max."

"We wish we knew how it was gotten out of Russia," Max replied. "However, no harm has been done. I will have it back--what is that?"

Fowler was also startled by the sudden rapping at the door. Ausable yawned.

"The gendarmes," Ausable said. "I thought that so important a paper as the one we are waiting for might well be given a little extra protection tonight."

Max bit his lip in uncertainty. The rapping was repeated.

"What will you do now, Max?" Ausable asked. "If I do not

answer, they will enter anyway. The door is unlocked, and they will not hesitate to shoot."

Max's face was furious as he backed swiftly toward the window. With his hand behind him, he flung it up and swung a leg over the sill.

"Send them away!" he rapped. "I will wait on the balcony. Send them away, or I'll shoot and take my chances!"

The rapping on the door became louder, and a voice called, "Monsieur (muh-syoor')! Monsieur Ausable!"

The doorknob turned. Swiftly, Max pushed off of the window sill with his left hand in order to drop to the balcony outside. As he dropped, he let out one, shrill scream.

The door opened, and a waiter stood there with a tray, a bottle, and two glasses.

"Monsieur, the drink you ordered for when you returned," he said, and set the tray on the table, deftly uncorked the bottle, and retired.

Fowler stared after him.

"But--" Fowler stammered, "the police--"

"There were no police." Ausable sighed. "It was only Henri whom I was expecting."

"But won't that man out on the balcony--" Fowler began.

"No," Ausable said. "He won't return. You see, my young friend, there is no balcony."

Appendix E

Questions: "The Great Penobscot Raid"

I. Setting:

(L) 1. Where and when does the story take place?

Character:

(L) 2. Name the three Penobscot Indians in the story.

(I) 3. How would you best describe the main character?

(L) 4. What is the main character's problem or goal?

II. Episode:

Initiating Event:

(L) 5. How did Menaagan's husband let her know he was nearby?

Internal Response:

(I) 6. Why did Menaagan and her husband and brother pretend to be strangers?

(I) 7. Why do you think the Great Chief Glooscap changed himself into a mosquito?

Attempt:

(L) 8. What four things did Glooscap tell Menaagan to do to escape from the Mohawks?

Consequence:

(I) 9. Why do you think the escape plan was successful?

Reaction:

(I) 10. Why did the Mohawks think that they were attacked by thousands of Penobscots?

Appendix F

Questions: "The Midnight Visitor

I. Setting:

(L) 1. Where and when does the story take place?

Character:

(L) 2. Name the three characters in the story and the occupation of each one.

(I) 3. Why was Fowler disappointed when he first met Ausable?

II. Episode:

Initiating Event:

(L) 4. What was in the report that was to be delivered to Ausable?

(L) 5. How did Max get into Ausable's room?

Internal Response:

(I) 6. What did Max mean when he said the report would be safer in his hands?

(I) 7. How did Ausable outwit Max?

Attempt:

(L) 8. What did Max do when he thought the police were at the door?

Consequence:

(I) 9. What happened to Max?

Reaction:

(I) 10. Do you think Fowler changed his opinion of Ausable at the end of the story? Why?